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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of Information

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May 31, 1941

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Part I - ~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~

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AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

SUMMARY OF FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS: CANADA: Indications are that the Canadian Foreign Exchange Control Board is trying to persuade the Brazilian Government to accept payment in sterling rather than American dollars for the large amount of Brazilian cotton which Canada is now buying. The sum involved would be sufficiently great to affect directly Canada's dollar exchange position. As Brazil is short on sterling no objection is being offered by the British Government. No attempt is to be made artificially to divert from the United States to Brazil future purchases of cotton. It is pointed out that the currency of payment would in no way affect the competitive position between the cotton of Brazil and American cotton.

BRAZIL: The Government is being approached by the French Government concerning the possibility of buying Brazilian cotton to be stored in Brazil until it can be transported, with interest payments to be made from the section of Brazilian Government bonds held by the French.

RUSSIA: Large scale deliveries of grain to Germany by the Soviet Government were not resumed until the end of March, but approximately 350,000 tons, including about 140,000 tons of wheat, were delivered by May 12. Indications are that the Soviets agreed in this connection to furnish grains as follows: March 80,000 tons; April 170,000 tons; May 200,000 tons; and June 200,000 tons. With respect to June deliveries, it is calculated that 25,000 tons will proceed by the Danube, 55,000 tons by the Black Sea, 45,000 tons by Baltic ports, and 75,000 tons by rail.

UNITED KINGDOM: A Government statement in Parliament indicates that the plow-up campaign objective of 3,750,000 acres by this spring has been achieved (i.e., in addition to the 8,800,000 acres of arable land in England and Wales reported in 1939) and that an additional 100,000 to 150,000 acres of waste land have been brought back into cultivation. Nearly 90,000 tractors are now in operation, an increase of 60 to 70 percent since the beginning of the war. The lack of adequate farm labor, however, is a serious problem. The Government is hopeful that the number of labor gangs can be increased from the present 6,000 to 9,000 by this autumn. Schools and universities have arranged to stagger their vacation periods to assist with the harvest. The Women's Land Army now numbers 11,000 and an additional 1,100 are in training. Some deferment is to be made in the call-up of farm workers for armed forces until after the harvest.

The Ministry of Food announced that a general program is being pushed forward for conserving and distributing local food supplies in the event of invasion. The country has been divided into districts, each of which will have its fair share of available food if isolated by enemy action. More than 500 voluntary food organizers have already been appointed to arrange distribution of food within districts during such an emergency.

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Part II - FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE

AGRICULTURE AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

FOOD WILL HELP WIN THIS WAR AS IT DID THE LAST. On this note, America's first National Nutrition Congress for Defense, ended its three-day session in Washington, after unanimously passing a set of recommendations to the President summarizing the delegates' ideas of the best ways to mobilize our national resources toward this end. The conference was attended by 900 delegates from all parts of the country, representing the medical and other scientific professions, the social-service professions, agriculture, labor, industry, consumers, and Government agencies. The meetings, held May 26 - 28, heard addresses by Vice President Wallace, Secretary Wickard, Food Coordinator McNutt, Assistant Secretary of State A. A. Berle, and other prominent people.

During the sessions a state of full national emergency was proclaimed by the President, an action which the delegates felt added especial significance to the conference's recommendations. To bring the United States closer to the ideal of a nation that has banished hunger from its boundaries, the conference recommended that "the newer knowledge of nutrition be used not only for the benefit of our armed forces, who must of course be adequately fed, but for the benefit of all workers in industries directly and indirectly related to defense and for the civilian population as a whole. "Wars are won or lost," the conference statement continued, "according to the health, courage, and calmness of whole populations and their ability to exert themselves to the utmost. This is particularly true of modern total warfare."

Vice President Wallace urged the conference to set for its goal No. 1 "the complete wiping out of death caused by dietary deficiency." Secretary Wickard told the delegates the American farmers can produce enough food to give the United States an adequate diet and still have enough left over to meet Great Britain's needs. In rural parts of the country, the conference recommended encouragement of more production at home for home use, emphasizing that "large numbers of farm families can greatly improve their nutritional status by making more complete use of the resources on their own farms." The conference endorsed "full use" of the stamp plan, free school lunches, and low-cost milk distribution to help distribute farm surpluses and at the same time raise the general nutritional level of the Nation. "No nation," the conference concluded, "certainly no great nation ever has truly conquered hunger, the oldest enemy of man. Such an aim is not too high. Such a goal is not too difficult for the people of the United States. "

BECAUSE OF THE SHORTAGE OF FARM LABORERS developing in parts of the country as a result of the defense program, Selective Service headquarters in Washington this week asked local draft boards throughout the Nation to "give most serious consideration" to occupational deferment requests made by farm laborers. The action was taken by Brig. Gen. Lewis B. Herschey, acting director of the Selective Service system, following receipt of a letter from Secretary Wickard warning that in some areas the new defense industries and the operations of the Selective Service Act have drawn upon the supply of farm workers to an extent that can endanger the production of foods essential to national defense. The Secretary's letter pointed out that between April 1, 1940 and April 1 of this year the available number of farm laborers in the United States had shrunk 17.8 percent. In the Middle Atlantic States the agricultural labor supply decreased 25.0 percent, in New England 25.1 percent, and in the North Central States, 21.6 percent.

APPOINTMENT OF M. CLIFFORD TOWNSEND TO SUCCEDE J. B. HUTSON as Director of the recently created Office of Agricultural Defense Relations was announced this week by Secretary of Agriculture Wickard. Hutson has been appointed president of the Commodity Credit Corporation succeeding Carl B. Robbins who resigned from the CCC presidency to enter private business. Townsend has been serving as special agricultural adviser to Sidney Hillman, Associate Director General of the Office of Production Management. The O.A.D.R. was established by the Secretary after President Roosevelt transferred the functions of the Agricultural Division of the National Defense Advisory Commission to the Department of Agriculture. Townsend has been identified with agriculture for the past twenty years. He was one of the founders and the director of organization for the Indiana Farm Bureau, and was Commissioner of Agriculture for Indiana from 1933 to 1937. He is a member of the Office of Production Management Plant Site Committee representing rural and semi-rural communities, and is chief of the Group Resources Unit, which is organizing the industrial production facilities in agricultural and semi-industrial communities.

UNDER PRESENT RATIONING, FOOD SUPPLIES IN MOST COUNTRIES OF CONTINENTAL EUROPE are expected to be sufficient to prevent serious distress at least until the arrival of the new crop, although diets are already considerably below normal. In some of the occupied countries--as well as in un-occupied France, Spain, and Finland--there is a shortage of essential foods and in certain quarters under-nourishment is already acute. Germany's food position, on the other hand, appears to be much better than in the war of 1914-18. A report, by the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations, points out that food reserves have been drawn upon in all countries to meet even restricted levels of consumption and that a further curtailment in rations may be necessary in some regions before the new harvest. Indications are that grain crops on the Continent this year will be somewhat larger than in 1940 but that root crops will be smaller. Production of livestock products will be considerably reduced. Assuming normal weather conditions and taking into account estimated shortages of draft power, farm labor and fertilizers, the aggregate food output of continental Europe in 1941-42 is not expected to be any larger than in 1940-41.

SUMMARY OF FOREIGN DEVELOPMENTS: GERMANY: The Reich Statistical Office stated that appreciable damage was suffered by winter crops from the recent spell of cold weather which in various parts of the country resulted in night frosts and in some districts light snowfalls. From all indications, however, the winter damage to this year's crop was below the average of the past several years.

UNITED KINGDOM: The Ministry of Food announced that gifts of food sent to the United Kingdom from abroad are to be further limited after June 23 in order to conserve shipping space. Unsolicited gifts addressed to individuals may not exceed five pounds gross weight, or contain more than two pounds of any one food. No permit or license is required but all parcels must be clearly marked as gifts. The maximum of five pounds will also be applied by the Board of Trade in case of non-foodstuffs. A gift cannot be regarded as unsolicited where it is received as a result of some prior communication sent to the donor by the recipient. Moreover, the receipt of gifts at frequent intervals cannot be permitted.

RUSSIA: A supplementary protocol to the agreement concerning trade turnover and payments between the U.S.S.R. and Denmark, which has been in effect since Sept. 18, 1940, was signed in Moscow on May 21, 1941. The supplementary protocol fixes the trade turnover between the two countries for the period from March 18, 1941, until April 30, 1942, at a total amount of 57,000,000 Danish kroner (\$11,400,000), or 28,500,000 (\$5,700,000) in each direction. Denmark will send to the U.S.S.R.

cranes, diesel motors, steam engines for ships, equipment for cement factories, and other machines and equipment. In exchange for these goods the U.S.S.R. will send to Denmark cotton, gas, oil, kerosene, phosphates, chemicals, tobacco, lumber, and other goods.

SWEDEN: Continued drought and cold weather are delaying the growth of pasturage. This, combined with the prevailing shortage of concentrated feeds, is causing a serious problem for farmers and it is expected to lead to further slaughtering.

NETHERLANDS: The following per capita food rations are now in effect: (1) per week: Bread 2,000 grams; potatoes 1,500 grams; milk 1.75 liters; flour 280 grams; butter 200 grams; margarine 200 grams or else fat 160 grams; cheese 100 grams; eggs 1. (2) Per eight days: Meat 200 grams; meat products 37.5 to 75 grams depending on type; chicken 50 grams. (3) Per three weeks: Pulses 500 grams; coffee substitute 250 grams; tea 40 grams. (4) Per month: Sugar 1 kilogram; rice 250 grams. (5) Per eight weeks: Rolled oats 250 grams; groats 250 grams; vermicelli 100 grams; maizena 100 grams.

